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MIRIAM KENT.

A TOUCHING CHRISTMAS STORY.

It was Christmas eve. Miriam Kent sat gazing intently into the fire. The room was elegantly and tastefully furnished, and the firelight shadows danced fantastically upon the wall, and flashed brilliantly from the mirrors, and costly ornaments scattered here and there in rich profusion. Upon the snowy bed lay a white silk dress, with rare point lace adorning the neck and sleeves. The wintry wind sweeping wildly around the house, and roaring down the chimney in fitful gusts, enhanced the warmth and glow reigning inside, but causing a sad and weary expression to fit over the beautiful features of the young girl seated there, silently watching the crimson sparks flying upward, and seemingly unconscious of all the comfort and magnificence surrounding her.

As the moaning of the wind increased she arose, and gliding softly across the floor, parted the heavy damask curtains draping one of the windows, and gazing out upon the fast falling snow, which was rapidly covering the earth with a mantle of spotless purity.

Wearily leaning against the casement, she murmured: "Oh! Richard, my brother, where are you to-night? If you were only here—my poor, poor wanderer!"

Standing there, the snowflakes drifting silently downward, seemed to send a strange rest and peace to her heart. She turned away from the window, but as her eyes fell upon the elegant dress shimmering in the crimson light of the fire—the dress which she was to wear at the grand Christmas party to be given the next night—she felt a sickening sensation, which nearly overpowered her for the moment. Her brother Richard had been in the habit of attending these festive gatherings, her chosen companion in every joy and grief; her darling, her idolized brother, and now he was wandering—where? It may be that the snow lay in heavy drifts upon his nameless grave, and she would look upon his loved face and listen to the music of his laughing voice, ah, never more.

Murmuring a fervent prayer to heaven for his protection, she left her apartment, and descending spiral stairway, entered the library, where sat a tall, slender, elderly gentleman, busily engaged in reading. His hair was heavily touched by the frosts of time, and a cold stern expression rested about his mouth; but a kindly light beamed in his eyes as they proudly rested upon his daughter, who had carelessly thrown herself upon a stool at his feet.

Laying one hand caressingly upon the golden curls clustering around the pure, white brow of his darling, he said: "Well, my pet, what do you wish for a Christmas gift?"

Raising her blue eyes for an instant to his face, she almost whispered, "I am afraid, father, that you will not give me what I most earnestly desire."

"Why, little one, have I ever denied you anything that was within my power to grant you?" replied the old man, letting his fingers wander tenderly through her sunny curls.

"No, father," she replied, "and it is within your power to give me this."

"Out with it, then, Miriam, my girl; tell your old father, and it is yours!"

The young girl remained silent for a few moments, as if summoning up her courage to make the request; where she had resolved to do ere she left the room where she had been so long mourning by the fire.

Suddenly clasping her hands around her father's knee, she looked up into his face with a wistful, anxious expression in her violet eyes, as she said, in a low, firm voice, "Father, give him back to me—my brother Richard!"

Five years had elapsed since the only son and brother had been banished from his childhood's home, and during that time no tidings had been received concerning the absent one.

After two years had crept wearily by, the loving mother, who had idolized her first-born son, her only son—died, with the loved name upon her lips.

Mr. Kent centered his affections upon his sole remaining treasure, with a strange, all absorbing passion. While to the world he was ever cold, stern and reserved, to this daughter he was never aught but good and kind, granting her every wish, and lavishing upon her all that money could bestow.

Beneath that cold, hard exterior, lay a stream of living, burning affection; and he worshipped Miriam as an idol. For her, his proud eyes would glow infinitely tender—his firm mouth would relax into a singularly grave, sweet smile—and his rigid, icy manner would melt into a warm, rare tenderness, beautiful to behold in a man; but upon this one theme—Richard Kent—he was ever silent—he would shut both lips and heart against the mention of the once loved name, although his inner self would often cry out for him who was once the pride and joy of his life.

Miriam had once or twice ventured upon the forbidden subject, but had been so rudely and harshly rebuffed that she had hitherto deemed it best to remain silent, for a time at least. But to-night she had fully determined to ask her father to grant this one yearning desire of her heart. She knew not what the consequences might be, yet she would make one last and earnest appeal in behalf of her darling brother.

"And here we find her saying, in that low, firm voice of hers—calm and sad, yet with a ring of resolution vibrating through the syllables—'Father, give me back my brother Richard!'"

"What! that name! Have I not forbidden any one to mention it in my presence?" he exclaimed in a cold, harsh tone, bitterly pushing her from him, while his face became fixed and rigid as iron.

Miriam, yet undaunted, arose from her low seat, and standing before him in all her sweet, girlish beauty, said, "Father, the most costly gift in the world would not be as precious to me as the return of my wandering brother! Do you not remember how full of life and sunshine he used to make these now desolate rooms? How you loved him then; how proud you were of his manly spirit and brave generous ways. And just because he would not bend to that royal spirit of yours, you banished him from your heart and home forever! Remember how my angel mother loved him (and her voice forget her last pleading words in his behalf, when dying? I seem to see her even now, as she said, 'and here Miriam knelt at her father's feet, while a thrill of tears trembled in her sweet voice: "John forgive our boy, and bring him back home again!" And oh! father, is not her heart sad even in heaven when she looks down and sees the vacant place in our household vacant still, and knows that her boy is yet a wanderer upon the face of the earth?"

A mist dimmed the old man's eyes and the stern lines about his mouth relaxed as he said, "Miriam, child, do not look at me so with your mother's eyes; I cannot bear it!" and

raising her with a gentle hand, he commenced pacing rapidly up and down the elegantly furnished apartment. Miriam remained standing where her father had left her, and dreamily said:

"Years ago the angels struck their golden lyres, and Heaven's melodious strains dropped their celestial harmony down where wild Judea stretched afar her silver-mantled plains."

"Glorious to God," the sounding skies rang loud with their anthems, "Peace on earth, good will to men." The young girl became eloquent in her warm and earnest appeal, her dreamy voice rang out clear and musical; her eyes sparkled with a holy radiance, and her cheeks glowed with the crimson flame, the warm rich blood had kindled there.

With a sudden burst of warmth and eagerness she exclaimed, "Oh, Father! extend your good will toward our absent one. Let peace once more fold her snowy wings over our household. Close not your heart against our Richard—let search to the uttermost ends of the earth, if need be, to find him and bring him back to our long desolate home!"

Mr. Kent still continued his walk up and down the further end of the apartment—seemingly unconscious of the words that had just been uttered. But any one who could have looked upon his face would have observed that it had considerably softened in expression, and that the hitherto proud eyes were dim with tears. He needed not the cessation of his daughters voice, or her departure from the room. A servant had entered with a message, and Miriam had gone to fulfill it. She went to the door as directed, and there stood a young man, pale, wan and haggard, his clothes covered with silvery snowflakes. But notwithstanding the change that time and long illness had produced, the loving, sisterly eyes of Miriam saw through the disguise, and knew that the long lost brother had returned. She threw her arms around his neck and wept tears of joy.

Mr. Kent continued his restless walk, apparently absorbed in his sad and bitter thoughts.

"Father!" He raised his head at the sound of his daughter's voice; but as his eye fell upon the stranger by his side, he started with an expression of mingled inquiry and surprise.

"Father, am I forgiven?" calmly asked a low, quiet voice. The familiar music touched a chord in the old man's heart, and a flash, like sudden sunshine, illumined the cold, haughty face.

"Richard, my boy, welcome home!" he uttered in a voice trembling with emotion, then he advanced toward the young man, leaning heavily on Miriam's arm.

The long lost son that was found was clasped in his father's arms, while a prayer, rich with gratitude and thanksgiving, was wafted upward from each of the three hearts thus united once more.

Richard raised his head from his father's shoulder, and letting his eyes wander inquiringly around the room, said: "Where is mother?"

Washington News and Gossip.

WASHINGTON, Dec. 14, 1873.

It is confidently asserted to-night by the friends of Mr. Williams that he will be confirmed as Chief Justice to-morrow by a strict party vote. It is also said that the President has made the confirmation a personal matter, and has caused it to be given out that any Senator voting against Mr. Williams will forfeit the friendship of the Executive. The President is displeased at the personal attacks made the nominee, and has followed the example of President Jackson in using his influence in favor of one who has been attacked on personal grounds. But, in spite of the confidence felt by the friends of Mr. Williams, it is asserted with equal positiveness among Senators to-night that he will not be confirmed. Though the Judiciary Committee cannot agree, yet the members are said to be opposed to the confirmation, Conkling and Frelinghuysen excepted.

Edmunds, the chairman, Carpenter and Wright, and the Democratic members of the committee, Messrs. Thurman and Stevenson, criticize the appointment as one that cannot have their support. The motives of Senator Conkling are ascribed to be his aspirations to the Presidential nomination in 1876, and his desire to keep the good will of the President.

Representative Cobb, of North Carolina, will to-morrow introduce into the House, for reference to the Committee on War Claims, a bill extending till March 3, 1875, the privilege of loyal Southerners to present claims before the commission here for property used by the Union armies in the rebel States during the rebellion.

The sudden termination of the right to file claims by the last Congress left a good many claimants out in the cold, and there is a demand all over the South for the extension of time the bill proposes to grant.

The bill goes further, however, and proposes to remove the strict technical construction put by the Claims Commissioner on the terms "stores and supplies," as used in the organic act of 1871, and under which they have declined jurisdiction over any claims for the use of buildings occupied as barracks, hospitals or storehouses, or other military purposes, and provides that they shall entertain such claims where the owners were loyal to the United States and the occupation of the premises embraced a period of thirty consecutive days. This particular limitation is introduced for the purpose of avoiding the consideration of cases of mere transient occupancy where any claim for rent would be too insignificant for prosecution, and the demand, in whatever form it might be put, would be really one for damages and not matter for compensation under the present views in Congress and the opinion of the President as expressed in two or three vetoes on relief bills passed for Southern claimants.

The bill also attempts to deal with the subject of how far Congress should now recognize the difficulties surrounding Union men in the rushing days of secession, when there appeared to be little chance of anything surviving of the Union but its past history. It provides that submission to the *de facto* authority of any State while the authority and protection of the United States were subverted and in abeyance, or compulsory service in the rebel State militia in the early days of the rebellion, or in the Confederate army after due service of notice under the conscript acts, shall not be held by the Claims Commission as conclusive evidence of disloyalty where a claimant's rebellion record is clear in other respects. The bill lastly attempts to remedy the yearly and entirely *pro forma* disallowance of large numbers of claims for want of sufficient proof by requiring that the Claims Commissioners shall give a claimant an opportunity to rebut presumptions against the claim before reporting it to Congress; but that having done so the report shall be final, and not be as now, subject to reconsideration.

Mrs. Attorney General Williams was enraptured when, ten days or so since, she received an elegant bouquet from Mrs. President Grant, with her compliments on the nomination of the Attorney General as Chief Justice. But while "the President proposes the Senate disposes," and it is doubtful whether the power of the administration in the Senate, marshalled by Conkling, can secure the nomination. Should Williams be rejected or withdrawn it remains to be seen whether the President will fall back on his original choice, Caleb Cushing. Fish has been for Caleb from the start, and he may end his eventful life as Chief Justice of the United States yet. But poor Williams!

WASHINGTON, Dec. 15, 1873.

Attorney General Williams said to-day that if he was not confirmed as Chief Justice he would not resume his seat in the Cabinet.

The House Committee on Appropriations this morning voted to offer a resolution in the House, requesting the President to request the various executive departments to revise their estimates for the next fiscal year, if possible, before January 5. The object is, of course, to find means to cut down the estimates, which were all made several months before the recent financial disturbances began and before it was known that the government revenues were likely to fall behind the national expenditures.

Justice Miller, of the Supreme Court, lectured to-night before the law class of Georgetown College, on "The Constitutional Powers of Congress," the power chiefly discussed being that of establishing a uniform system of bankruptcy. The lecturer took decided ground against the total repeal of the bankrupt act of 1867, as proposed in Congress, but favored amendments that would get away with such evils as the swelling up of a bankrupt estate in official fees and expenses without benefit to the creditors, and the oppression of debtors, and the ruin of their business by unscrupulous creditors through resort to the involuntary clauses of the act. Justice Miller held that in an active trading community like the United States it was a matter of high public policy to leave the way open for those hopelessly involved in their affairs to begin life anew with such hope, energy and skill as they might possess, on the condition of giving up all they had of material wealth for equitable division among their creditors. To do less than this would be to saddle the unfortunate trader with a burden that would be likely to paralyze his whole future life and energy, and so diminish his worth as a member of the body politic.

The Senate was in executive session several hours this afternoon on the nomination of George H. Williams to be Chief Justice, and adjourned without confirming it. Some doubts are expressed by several of the Senators as to a favorable result, while others are reluctant to express opinions on the subject.

The leading lawyers of the Oregon Bar and many prominent officials and persons in that State have united in a telegram to the Judiciary Committee of the Senate protesting against the confirmation of Williams as Chief Justice. Telegrams have been received by Senator Kelly and Representative Nesmith requesting them in the name of the people to do all in their power to prevent the confirmation. They are referred to the telegram sent to the committee, which it is understood is quite lengthy, but these gentlemen have been unable to see it and therefore only conjecture its purport. The telegram was laid before the committee this morning, and evidently must be the subject

of serious consideration, as it was notable that the members composing the Judiciary Committee were absent from the Senate Chamber during most of the public session to-day. A few days since Attorney General Williams removed his place a lawyer by the name of Mallory, Gibbs, who was a former law partner of Williams, is a republican, and was during the civil war the Governor of the State. At the late Congressional election there were quite a number of fraudulent votes cast, and under the instructions of Judge Deady, of the United States District Court, at a recent term, certain parties were indicted, whom Gibbs had avowed his determination to prosecute to the full extent of the law. It is claimed that he was removed to prevent these trials, at which the better men of both political parties felt aggrieved. No justifiable reason whatever can be assigned for the removal.

WASHINGTON, Dec. 16, 1873.

The nomination of Attorney General Williams for the Chief Justiceship is still before the Judiciary Committee, with little prospect of their reporting it favorably, and it is now understood that the nomination will be withdrawn.

The House prolonged its session until half-past five o'clock to-day, in the hope of passing a salary bill which would satisfy their constituents, without doing much damage to their own pockets. Fortunately the debate was carried on under the five-minute rule, although Mr. Eldridge, having prepared a very patriotic speech on the subject, in which he alluded to almost everything, from the crucifixion to the Credit Mobilier scandal, was allowed to go on, and had nearly finished, when young Mr. Hale objected. Mr. Hale, of New York, occupied his five minutes in denouncing the way in which the bill of March 3 had been passed by being tucked on to an appropriation bill at the closing hours of a session. General Hurlbut introduced an amendment, which created roars of laughter. It provided for three classes of salaries, members to choose according to their own estimate of their worth. Mr. Williams, of Massachusetts, favored a return to the old basis, or a compromise on \$6,000. After considerable confusion the House accepted Mr. Kasson's amendment, making the salaries retroactive to March 3, and then adjourned. Some of the members wanted to sit until the bill was passed, and were much chagrined to find that the men who pretended to be most zealous about the matter were the ones who were most anxious to adjourn. Mr. Hale's bill fixes the pay of Congressmen at \$5,500, and cuts down all others to former amounts.

Nearly all the time of the Senate to-day was occupied by Senator Morton, who called up his resolution, introduced yesterday, declaring that Pinchbeck has a *prima facie* case and is entitled to a seat. An attempt was made to stage debate on the question until after the holidays, but it was unsuccessful. Morton had appeared himself and desired to speak, and so Mr. Sherman consented that the unfinished business should go over, in order to allow Mr. Morton's resolution to be taken up. Some little discussion arose concerning the printing of the testimony taken last year, but Mr. Morton said that testimony had nothing to do with the present case. It had not even been considered in the committee this year. Besides, it would cost several thousand dollars to print it. Finally the motion to print was laid aside, and Mr. Morton addressed the Senate on his resolution.

Mr. McCreery, of Kentucky, announced that he should speak upon the topic to-morrow, and Mr. Morton's resolution was laid over until then to allow the Senate time to consider executive business. There is every prospect of the debate continuing even after the holidays.

The House Committee on Military Affairs held a meeting to-day and discussed the resolution of Mr. Wood, which was referred to them by the House, with reference to the alleged defalcation of General Howard in connection with his administration of the affairs of the Bureau of Freedmen, Refugees and Abandoned Lands. A resolution was adopted instructing the chairman to issue notices to General Howard, Secretary Belknap and General Vincent to appear before them to-morrow morning with a view to begin a preliminary investigation of the subject, and to guide the committee in recommending what definite action should be taken upon the letter of the Secretary of War submitted to Congress.

Mr. James Lyons, Richmond, Va., who was the President of the Louisville Democratic Convention, which nominated Mr. O'Connor for the Presidency, was recently tendered the appointment of United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Virginia. His letter declining the appointment very plainly intimated that he could not think of accepting the position when the President had the power to have tendered him the higher place of United States District Judge, which had become vacant by the recent death of Judge Underwood.

DEATH OF PROF. AGASSIZ.—Prof. Louis Agassiz, the most distinguished naturalist of America, and highly appreciated in the scientific circles of the entire world, departed this life in Boston on Sunday night, 14th of December, in the 67th year of his age, from the effect of paralysis, induced by cerebral congestion. His ancestors were of French origin, but Agassiz was a native of Switzerland where he was born on the 28th of May, 1807. In 1818 he entered the Gymnasium of Bienne, and in 1822 was removed to the Academy of Lausanne as reward for his proficiency in science. He subsequently studied medicine and the experimental sciences at Zurich, Heidelberg and Munich, at which last university the degree of M. D. was conferred upon him. Afterwards, in Paris, he won the friendship of Humboldt and Curvier, and on returning to Switzerland was appointed Professor of Natural History at the College of Neuchâtel. He published in Europe several scientific works, one of which, "Studies of Glaciers," was received with the most flattering interest. In 1846 Mr. Agassiz embarked for this country to assume the position of Professor of Zoology and Geology at the Lawrence Scientific School. It was not long before he assumed a prominent position among the scientific men in America, and for many years past his name has been on every tongue. He was an enthusiastic devotee to study and research and not only this country, but the world, owe much to the results of his explorations and skill. At the time of his death he was a member of all of the scientific academies in Europe, and had repeatedly refused the offer of positions abroad. He was one of the most remarkable men of the age, and scientific men everywhere will mourn his loss.

An intelligent resident of Maine lately sued a neighbor for slander in having called him "an indefatigable genius," and an equally intelligent judge and jury awarded \$212 damages for the undeserved epithet.

The best soil is sensitive of neglect and ill-treatment, and is sure to revenge itself upon those who are guilty of them.

Important Information.

By an act of the Legislature, approved by the Governor on the 25th of November, 1873, some very material changes have been made in the Code of Procedure of this State, the most important of which we note below:

1. The jurisdiction of the Supreme Court to review upon appeal has been amended as follows:

First. By striking out subdivision 1 of section 11 and inserting the following: Any intermediate order or decree involving the merits of actions commenced in the Courts of Common Pleas and General Sessions, brought there by original process or removed there from an Inferior Court or jurisdiction and final judgments in such actions, provided if no appeal be taken until final judgment is entered, the Court may upon appeal from such final judgment revive any intermediate order or decree affecting the judgment not before appealed from.

Second. By inserting in subdivision 2 of same section, after word "trial" in the fourth line, the words "or when such order strikes out an answer or any parts thereof, or any pleading in any action."

2. In cases where the personal estate of a deceased person is insufficient to pay debts, power is given to Judges of Probate, all persons interested being first summoned, to order sale of real estate sufficient for this purpose. Judges of Probate are also given the right to make all such orders as may be necessary to secure the marshalling and administering the assets of deceased persons.

3. Trial Judgments are given jurisdiction in civil actions against executors and administrators, where the sum in controversy does not exceed \$100, and does not involve the title to real estate. In courts of trial justices where more than \$25 is demanded on the complaint, the same must be served on the defendant twenty days before trial, and when less than that sum is demanded he is allowed five days to answer. In cases, however, where the plaintiff makes affidavit that he is apprehensive of losing his debt by such delay, the time for answering may be shortened in the discretion of the court.

4. In actions for the recovery of real property, seizure within ten years is made necessary, instead of seizure within twenty years.

5. Sub-division 4, Section 157, is amended by adding the following: If said defendant is a resident of the State, but is temporarily absent therefrom, to any person over twenty-one years of age, residing at the residence or employed at the place of business of such absent person. In cases of non-resident infant defendants, personal service is made necessary, in addition to the publication; and publication hereafter need only be made in one newspaper.

6. In issues of both law and fact, the issues shall be tried together, unless the court otherwise directs.

7. The plaintiff in litigated cases must, within fourteen days before the court file, in the clerk's office, the summons and complaint in the cause, endorsing thereon the nature of the issue and the number of the docket; failing to do so the defendant may file copies of such papers, with a like endorsement, and no further notice of trial is necessary.

8. Final judgments hereafter entered in any court of record in this State shall constitute a lien on all the real property of the judgment debtor in the county where the same are entered, for a period of ten years from the date of such judgment. Where judgments have been obtained and entered since March 1, 1870, a like lien may be created by the service of a summons on the judgment debtor, or, if dead, his legal representative, to show cause (if any he has) at the next ensuing term of the court why said judgment should not be declared a lien on all his real property, and if no sufficient cause be shown, such judgment shall be and become a lien on all the real property of the judgment debtor in the county where entered, for ten years from the date of filing of such summons, with proof of service thereof, in the office of the clerk of court. Where judgments have become liens by execution the lien of such judgment shall date from the day it became a lien under the code.

9. Executions against personal property are liens for four months from day of levy, and may be renewed, and are returnable "according to law."

10. Sheriffs are required at each regular term of the court to make under oath an account of their actings and doings under each execution.

11. Hereafter no judgment can be obtained except in term time and in open court. The clerk must keep a new docket, in which he must place all cases in which there is no defence, and judgment in such cases can only be obtained on an order from the presiding judge in term time and in open court.

12. The costs of attorneys are reduced as follows: 1. To the plaintiff, for all proceedings where judgment is obtained by default, \$15. Trial issue of fact, \$20. Trial issue of law, \$15. 2. To the defendant, where judgment is found for defendant, the same costs are allowed to plaintiff. 3. To either party, in all continued cases, \$15. Admission to take testimony, \$10. Examination of a party before trial, \$5. Appointment of a guardian, \$10. Making and serving a case, &c., \$10. Order of injunction, \$5. 4. To either party, on appeal to the Supreme Court, \$20. Argument, \$30.

This does not apply to suits existing and going on at the time of the passage of this act.

13. Actions on sealed notes and personal bonds for the payment of money only must be commenced within six years from date of maturity.

14. Section 357 of the Code is amended as follows: The appeal to the Supreme Court under subdivision 2 of Section 11 of this Code, must be taken within sixty days after written notice of the order shall have been given to the party appealing; every other appeal allowed by the 2d chapter of this title must be taken within three months after the judgment shall be perfected by the filing of the judgment roll.

No rule or order of any court or judge shall require the printing of any brief, report or other paper connected with appeals by any party to an action or proceeding who makes an affidavit, to be filed with the clerk of the Supreme Court, that he or she is unable to pay for such printing.—*Aiken Tribune.*

Ladies who find pleasure in window gardening may be reconciled to the smoking habits of their "other half," if they know that they can utilize the cigar stumps in a very desirable way. Put the stumps into the watering pot, turn on cold water, set it on the stove until it is blood warm, then thoroughly wet the earth around the plants with this tobacco tea, and the bugs which infest the plants, and are such a source of vexation, will leave at once.

It is suspicious of demonstration, that corruption has existed in all ages and is not peculiar to any people or any climate. Man has not changed his nature, but he has changed his tailor. The desire for gain and the tendency to evil came in with the fig-leaf and continue to the swallow-tail suit. Tailors change, but the old Adam does not.

Not even his surroundings could shake his political convictions, and when the fifteenth amendment became a portion of the law of the land, he declaimed violently against it, and said "the confounded radicals would be sorry for it some day or other." He boasted that he had voted for every democratic President from the time he had attained the right to vote, with the exception of Buchanan, of whom he was not in favor. Previous to the war he took a great interest in the success of his party, and for years attended the Presidential inaugurations. Though a strong partisan, he never held or sought any judicial position, preferring, as he said, the private station.

He kept open house at his homestead near St. Louis, and at which place the President, then a lieutenant in the Fourth United States Infantry, stationed at Jefferson barracks, in the vicinity, first met Miss Dent and afterwards married her. The farm, considerably enlarged by the purchase of adjoining tracts, is now the property of President Grant, and it is understood will be his future home after he lays aside the cares of office.

Fencing and Soiling Stock in Georgia.

MR. EDITOR: In the agricultural department of your paper I wish, if you can obtain it, you would give the experience of those counties in any State that have dispensed with the use of fencing. The farmers in this country—middle Georgia—are so wedded to old traditions and customs that they cannot understand the arguments setting forth the manifold disadvantages of the present system of worm fences; nor have they any idea that it is far better to soil than pasture cattle. I believe there is no country in the world where cattle could be grown to greater perfection than here, if proper attention was paid to soiling. We can raise the cow pea in abundance, and certainly there is no food which cattle relish more. We can raise sweet potatoes more easily and with less labor than you can raise turnips, and certainly there is more nutrition in the one than the other.

We have neither the excessive heat of your summers nor the intense severity of your winters. Where I live there are no chills and fever; the nights in July and August are cool and pleasant, free from mosquitoes, and snow rarely falls during the winter, and lasts scarcely over a day. One great reason why we cannot diversify our crops but are forced to plant chiefly cotton and corn is the immense amount of fencing required for the purpose. No man can be said practically to own any land that is not enclosed with a fence; the rest is all waste and common, to be roamed and pastured over by the stray cattle of the community. The main argument against the use of fences is that the poor man could raise no cattle; hence large tracts of land are thrown out of cultivation annually for want of fencing. Consequently the country is growing poorer for the benefit of the poor man; meanwhile there is not a proper fence in the country, and the destruction to the crops of cotton and corn every year from breaching by cattle if calculated in figures would hardly be credited. There is also another reason why we do not diversify our crops. The negro prefers greenbacks to solid comfort. For cotton we obtain money in exchange, and with money the negro can buy sweetmeats, or a horse, or a pistol, or anything that is worthless. The abolition of fences and the soiling of cattle would operate a revolution in Southern agriculture.

If some practical Northern farmer would come and settle among us and pay attention to the soiling of cattle, and introduce among us all the modern improvements, his example would outweigh all editorial advice on the subject of a diversity of crops.

JOSHUA NICHOLAS.

Warrenton, Warren County, Ga.

REMARKS.—New York State has a law which compels every man to fence his own stock and obliges him to fence against no one's else, really. At any rate there is a law which prevents any one turning his stock into the highways. We remember that when this law was being discussed great opposition was made to it because it was going to deprive the poor man of the privilege of keeping a cow or a pig; but it was urged that it would be cheaper for a neighborhood of farmers to agree to pasture a cow for each poor man therein than to be compelled to fence against them. The law was enacted some years ago and the result is that it has cost the people of the State far less for fencing and no poor man who was not too lazy to work (and the sooner all such are starved or driven out of any neighborhood the better) ever suffered perceptibly. Farmers will keep a cow for an honest, industrious poor man at a merely nominal sum. We do not think the farmers of New York could be induced to open their highways to live stock now.

In some States where attempts have been made to enact a general stock law of this character it has failed, especially in the newer Western States, where there are vast unoccupied ranges for stock. Each farmer is compelled to fence against his neighbors' stock; but as these countries have become thickly settled, the farmers have to the legislature to pass a law submitting the question on a vote of the inhabitants of individual counties. In some cases the vote has been strong in favor and in others equally strong against such a fence law—depending chiefly upon the density of the population and the interests involved. As to the profits of soiling in any given locality, that must depend upon the price of labor, value of land, and the market value of stock or its products. There are doubtless many localities in the South where it would be cheaper to soil stock than to build fences. This is, however, a question that requires more elaborate discussion than we now have space to give to it.—*New York World.*

DEATH OF COL. DENT, THE PRESIDENT'S FATHER-IN-LAW.—Col. Frederick Dent, the father of Mrs. Grant, died at the Presidential mansion, Washington, just before midnight on Monday, the 15th inst. His death was unexpected, as he had been in feeble health for some time past. He complained of being unwell during the day on Monday, but no alarming symptoms were apparent until a short time before his death, which occurred without a struggle.

Mr. Dent was a native of Frederick, Md. He was in his 88th year, having been born October 6, 1786. He removed to Missouri in 1812, and resided either in or near the city of St. Louis until 1865, when he came to Washington, and has ever since been a member of the President's family, remaining at the White House during the winter season, and in the summer accompanying his son-in-law and daughter to Long Branch.

The old gentleman was quite a character in his way; a genial, social man, who honestly spoke his opinions. He belonged to the old time Maryland and Virginia school of politics, and stuck to these principles to the last. He frequently amused himself by sitting in the anteroom or office of the White House, watching the numerous aspirants for official favors as they came to press their claims, and making quaint remarks with regard to the "corn-rot," as he termed the office-seekers.

Not even his surroundings could shake his political convictions, and when the fifteenth amendment became a portion of the law of the land, he declaimed violently against it, and said "the confounded radicals would be sorry for it some day or other." He boasted that he had voted for every democratic President from the time he had attained the right to vote, with the exception of Buchanan, of whom he was not in favor. Previous to the war he took a great interest in the success of his party, and for years attended the Presidential inaugurations. Though a strong partisan, he never held or sought any judicial position, preferring, as he said, the private station.

He kept open house at his homestead near St. Louis, and at which place the President, then a lieutenant in the Fourth United States Infantry, stationed at Jefferson barracks, in the vicinity, first met Miss Dent and afterwards married her. The farm, considerably enlarged by the purchase of adjoining tracts, is now the property of President Grant, and it is understood will be his future home after he lays aside the cares of office.